

Chief of Naval Operations

Adm. Gary Roughead delivers remarks at the

Association of Naval Services Officers (ANSO) 30th Annual Professional Development and Training Symposium

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Thank you Emilio for that introduction and thank you for all that you do and also for being the Navy representative. Thank you for that. I would also like to thank Commander Katson for all that she does as she leaves this organization. Some of you may know that Angela and I have served together before at the Naval Academy and I am thrilled that you are going to continue to be a voice in the Navy and a leader in the Navy, particularly in an area that is extraordinarily important to all of us and that is diversity. It is great to be here with all of you, here to take part in such a positive and practical gathering of sea service professionals. This symposium is geared towards action and I can sense in just walking around and talking to folks that are here that the week has been one of energy and action.

I want to address the action we're taking in the Navy to improve the core strength of our force, and I'd like to recognize ANSO for the critical role it play in our efforts and will continue to play in our efforts.

ANSO is an important organization that figures prominently in our Navy with its outreach, it's information, and it's support to members over the last three decades, as originally envisioned by the honorable Edward Hidalgo, a Secretary of the Navy, an influential advisor in matters of national defense, the secretary, a skilled lawyer, and a naval officer. ANSO has nurtured some of the great leaders in our Navy. Today, I am fortunate enough to be able to call on Rear Admiral Pat Brady who is doing absolutely extraordinary work as the commander of our Space and Warfare Systems command where he's improving the way that we integrate very complex systems into our ability to do the nation's work. And also to Rear Admiral Sam Perez who is in command of Carrier Strike Group One, one of the best jobs that anybody in the Navy can have.

While we celebrate Hispanic Americans like those, we recognize that ANSO is an organization with an even greater role to play, as evidenced by last year's U.S. census results which show the Hispanic community to be the largest and fastest growing minority community within the United States, a community that has grown by over 43% over the last decade to 51 million people.

A community whose participation and involvement, we need to keep our Navy reflective of our nation, responsive to its needs, and ready for a future that will demand more than ever from the American people. You are all well aware the Navy is in high demand today as evidenced by recent operations everywhere from Afghanistan, to Libya to Japan. I think we can all take pride in the extraordinary precision and professionalism of the SEALs and all those who were involved in the recent operation that resulted in the death of Osama Bin Laden. It's also reflected in our forceful response to the Libyan regime's unacceptable violence against its own people. What we brought to bear were unique capabilities from the sea to create the conditions where a no-fly zone could be put in place so that innocent civilians could be protected from harm. It's also a force that is present in Afghanistan, whether one of our Individual Augmentees on the ground or an aircraft launched from one of our carriers in the North Arabian Sea that continues to provide 30% of the air support to the troops on the ground in Afghanistan, it's been something that has been going on for over nine years from those ships. And of course, our efforts to support Japan with humanitarian assistance, nuclear and medical expertise, transportation, and divers to clear shipping lanes which permit the free flow of aid that have proven so crucial to bringing relief to our friends, the people of Japan.

The Navy is of course a much richer and agile force. One that is able to deliver results in these complex and simultaneous missions as well as to maintain the global forward presence elsewhere that the nation values so highly – because of the diverse perspectives we now hear from within our own ranks we can do that better than we have been able to do in the past. But we are entering a period of converging challenges that will require diversity of expertise as much as diversity of thought so that we continue to provide the relevant

force and the relevant service to the American people. Global trends in economics, demographics, resources, climate change, and threat proliferation promise disruption and disorder. The speed of global commercial interactions in the digital age will continue to be broadly positive for us all, but the speed with which events develop will challenge our ability to anticipate the impact of local frictions, and our interconnectedness will deliver those impacts to us more directly than before.

Finally, the nature of the naval profession itself is changing, this time due to pervasive information technologies which have added a new dimension in which we live and operate. We call it cyberspace. The Navy is an organization that values being at the forefront of developments like these, and we will be unduly challenged if any communities – ethnic, socio-economic, or geographic – continue to be underrepresented in our force. Today, our Navy is recognized for its best practices in diversity, and we do have good initiatives yielding measureable results that we could only have achieved with a sustained approach. In the last two years, the Navy has won seven awards from independent organizations for being a top federal agency for diversity, a forward-looking organization that supports diversity in the technical workforce, and as a model of corporate ethics for training-to-employment models geared towards our wounded warriors transitioning from active duty.

Last month, the association of diversity councils named Navy's strategic diversity working group the best in the nation – ahead of fortune 500 companies, renowned medical centers, publishing houses and leading technical research universities. While we welcome these accolades, they are not the goal of our efforts. They are also not indicative of the long-term commitment we have to building a stronger Navy for the nation. The recently completed military leadership diversity commission report recommended that all the services adopt the diversity accountability reviews the Navy has conducted throughout my four years as the chief of naval operations. There was no short cut to achieving the most diverse naval academy and naval reserve officer training corps accessions ever, with the class of 2014 have a 35% minority representation at the Naval

Academy and a 40% representation at NROTC. I would just like to recognize some of the unsung heroes who make that happen, who happen to be at my table – the recruiters who are out and about, looking for young men and women, exposing them to what the Navy has to offer and letting them find us. So to all those who do that work, thank you very much.

It is also through that type of work that we have seen a marked increase in the high-quality diverse recruits we've seen in terms of G.P.A., standardized testing, technical background, and conduct across the board over the last three years. That is no coincidence; it is a result of plain hard work. Programs such as the Navy Nuclear Propulsion (Officer) Candidate Scholarship or the Supply Corps internship-to-employment model, these are not short term approaches. Nor is the young investigator program, which awarded \$10.8 million in research grants to diverse scientists and engineers at 18 premier academic institutions. That initiative was launched in 1985 and has supported the professional development of over 500 talented individuals.

These are important initiatives to which we are committed, but our focus is on getting past what remain peripheral programs to reflect an institutional view of diversity as a core strength of our Navy.

As part of that, the comparatively low number of Hispanic American officers in our Navy requires particular attention.

While the Hispanic enlisted submarine community, for example, tracks rather closely with the Hispanic national workforce at 13% and 14%, respectively, only a little better than 4% of submarine officers are Hispanic. While not all of our submarine officers have technical degrees, the fact that 7% of American technical college graduates are Hispanic suggests we could be doing better in that area. And while some communities within our Navy, such as the Civil Engineering Corps, have seen Hispanic accessions rise to 15% of all CEC officers, the Hispanic commander and captain command 'pools' stand at equal or smaller percentages than the rest of the Hispanic commanding officers today. Which when viewed alongside the CEC, or Civil Engineering Corps, junior officer loss data suggests that we are not yet on a path to achieve

the throughput required for more proportional Hispanic representation at the senior ranks. This is not to single out two communities. They are merely representative of the challenges we face in improving outreach, improving retention, and a promotion of Hispanic Americans in our Navy.

A focus on the substance of what our nation needs for a viable defense, a viable economy, and how the two are inextricably linked through education, Navy outreach, and your mentorship of others as ANSO members will be a critical part of how we improve these trends. What we have learned in our efforts to institutionalize diversity in our ranks is that it takes early and repeated mentorship, and targeted outreach where we know young Americans still don't know what we do – and, quite critically, what they can do with us to help their families, to help their communities, and to help their fellow Americans. Even though the Navy continues its very productive university affiliated research center relationship with the University of Texas at Austin, working on hypervelocity and pulsed power physics, it was in Grand Prairie, Texas, that a high school student asked me – “can I be an engineer in the Navy?” So it's here in Texas – in places like Edinburg, where corporal Alfredo Gonzales was raised before becoming a marine, and for those of you who don't know what he did, he is the recipient of the highest award for valor in our nation. And it's where Sailors from USS Gonzales still visit his mother, Dolia – that we're pursuing the first components of an innovative core educational partnership which emphasizes STEM education at the middle school level, pre-college experience at our working labs, and graduate-level scholarship opportunities.

Whether these young men and women choose to serve or not, young people involved in programs like the one that we are developing at the University of Texan-Pan American will know and think about the undeniable good our Navy does every day in every ocean. They will come to know that you can be an engineer in the Navy, but also a pilot, a nuclear-trained submariner, a surgeon, a financial analyst, an information technology expert, a linguist, or a research scientist. They will see that we have the finest Sailors

in the history of the Navy today, and understand that we are a powerful Navy with global responsibilities thanks to our people, first and foremost.

Diversity of thought and expertise are strategic imperatives for our Navy precisely because they will prepare the kind of leaders we will need for global leadership in the future.

That is why I applaud the demonstrated interest and potential for leadership displayed by each one of you in this audience today. You are why I am convinced that our energy and commitment to outreach at all levels, and mentorship for those following you, will begin to deliver exponentially improved results; it's only now a question of how soon. I ask you to take what you've thought about here, what you've learned as your time in the sea services, and speak with others about what we do – what they can study, make a career in, and contribute. Tell them about the talented young Sailors doing great things in countless spots around the globe and in their communities right now, and how you got to where you are contributing so greatly today.

You and I serve in challenging times. Our current operations affirm that. And they also affirm that not only are the times challenging but they are changing. Much of what you will contend with in the course of your careers will not be known, just as a junior officer I could neither anticipate all the contingencies the United States would face, nor could I imagine the sheer scope of the distributed and highly-networked operations our Navy would come to conduct as a matter of simple routine. But some of these challenges we can see coming and we can be certain that they will require a Navy to contend with. What is more, some of these changes represent opportunities for us to harness to our advantage.

Over the course of 235 years, the Navy has gone from strength to strength through times of complex global change and, since the service of Admiral Farragut and so many before him, with considerable contributions from Hispanic Americans. We know the growth in our nation today is to the southern and western reaches of the continental United States. We know that minorities now form the majority in our two most populous states – California and here in Texas – and that minority children account for the majority of those under 18

years of age in states like Arizona and Florida. We as a Navy must take heed of such signals, and build upon our valued heritage of adaptability in earnest, for as American demographics change, the pool of potential leaders changes with it, and we must include as many qualified applicants as we possibly can.

I am confident about our future because no nation is better-equipped to lead in the global economy, no service is better-suited to preserve the nation's enduring interests, and more of the best minds our nation has to offer are poised to contribute than at any time in our nation's history. Our charge now is to act so that we capitalize on these uniquely American advantages, and ensure our Navy remains ready to be that institution that the nation looks to for greater peace and prosperity in the years ahead. I thank you for what you do. I thank you for coming together but most of all I thank you for what you are going to do in the future. Thank you very much.